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(54) **GENERATING ACTIVE LINKS BETWEEN MODEL OBJECTS**

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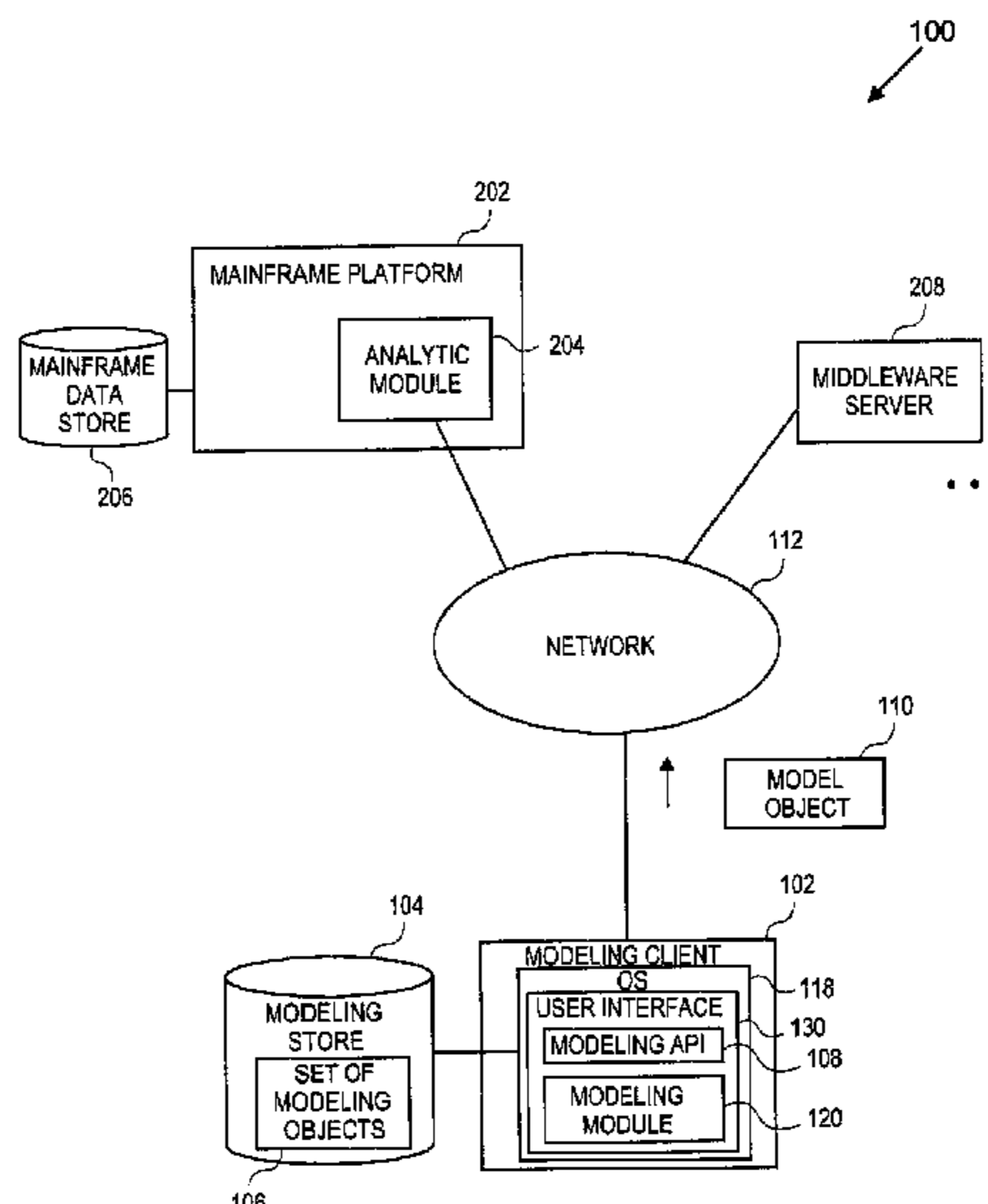
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

Embodiments relate to generating active links between model objects. A modeling client can host modeling logic and an application programming interface (API) to create, access, manipulate, and import/export modeling objects used in modeling applications, such as engineering, medical, financial, and other modeling platforms. The source data accepted into the modeling client can include consumer or business-level applications, whose spreadsheet, database or other content can be extracted and encapsulated in object-oriented format, such as extensible markup language (XML) format. Links can be inserted in the resulting model object to link to external resources, such as additional model objects, services, local or remote modeling tools, or other resources. The model object can share, exchange, or combine data from other model object (s), as well as instantiate functions hosted in other model object(s). Multiple links can be inserted to multiple model objects in linked list, node, or other configurations.

23 Claims, 6 Drawing Sheets



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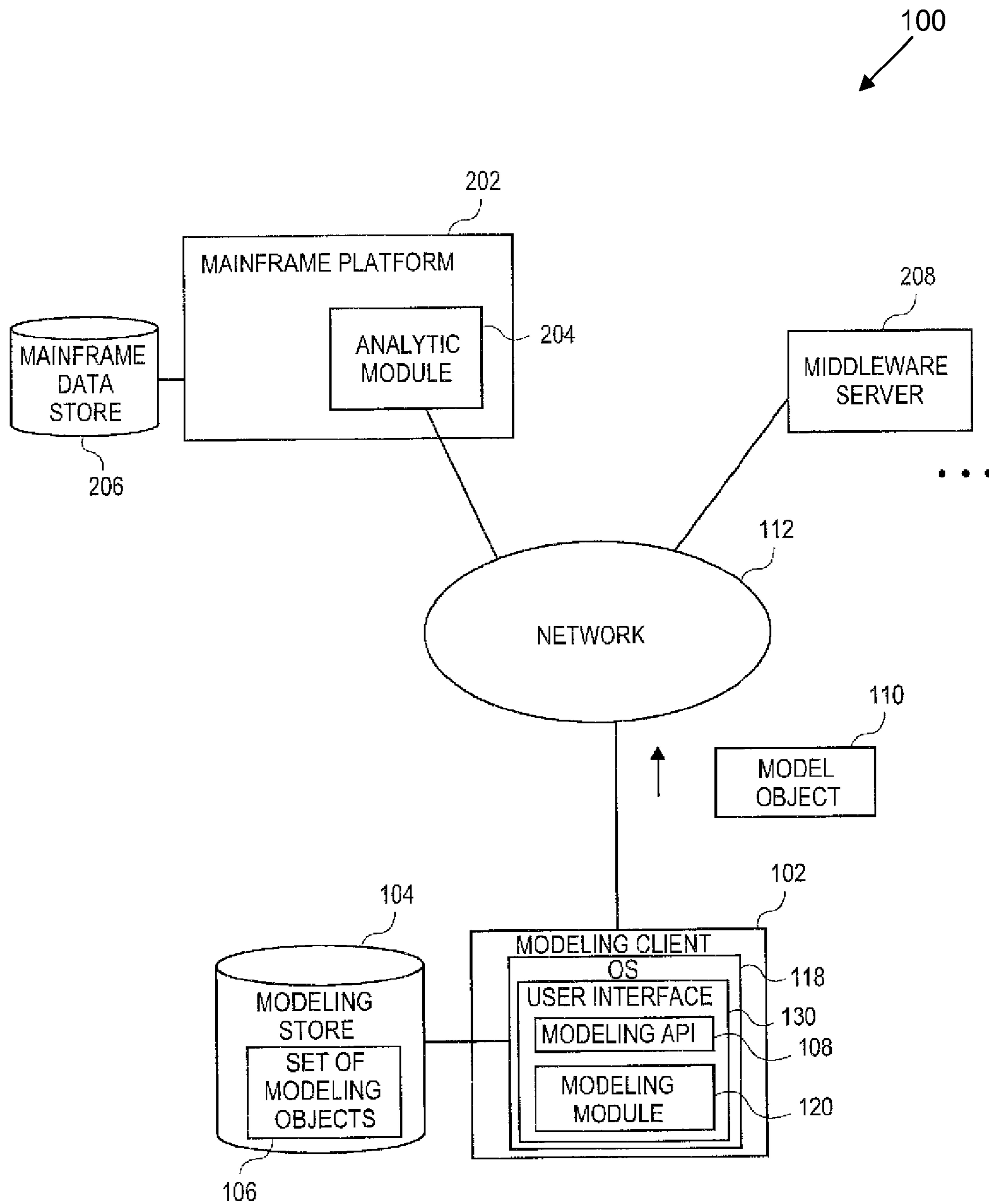


FIG. 1

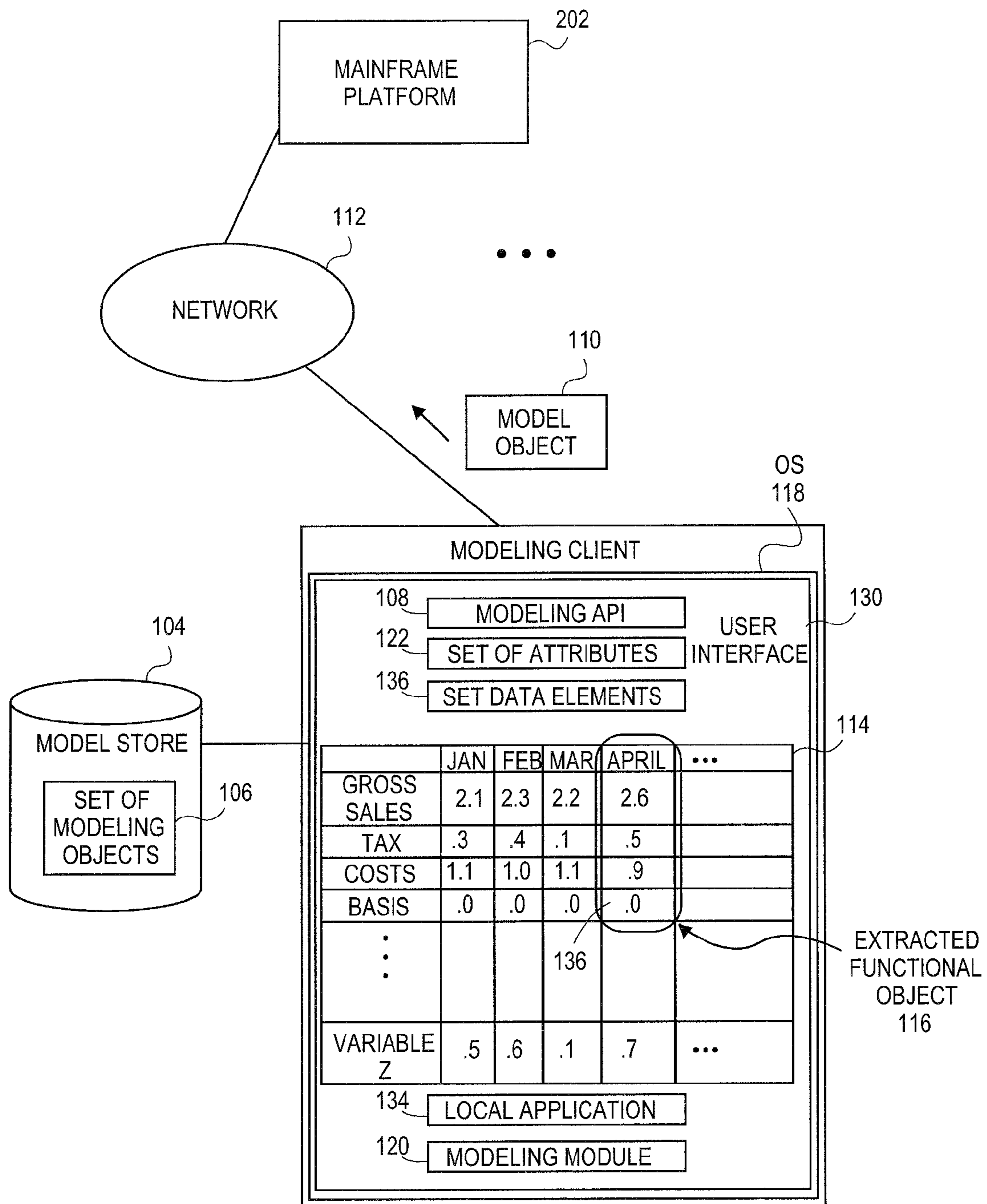


FIG. 2

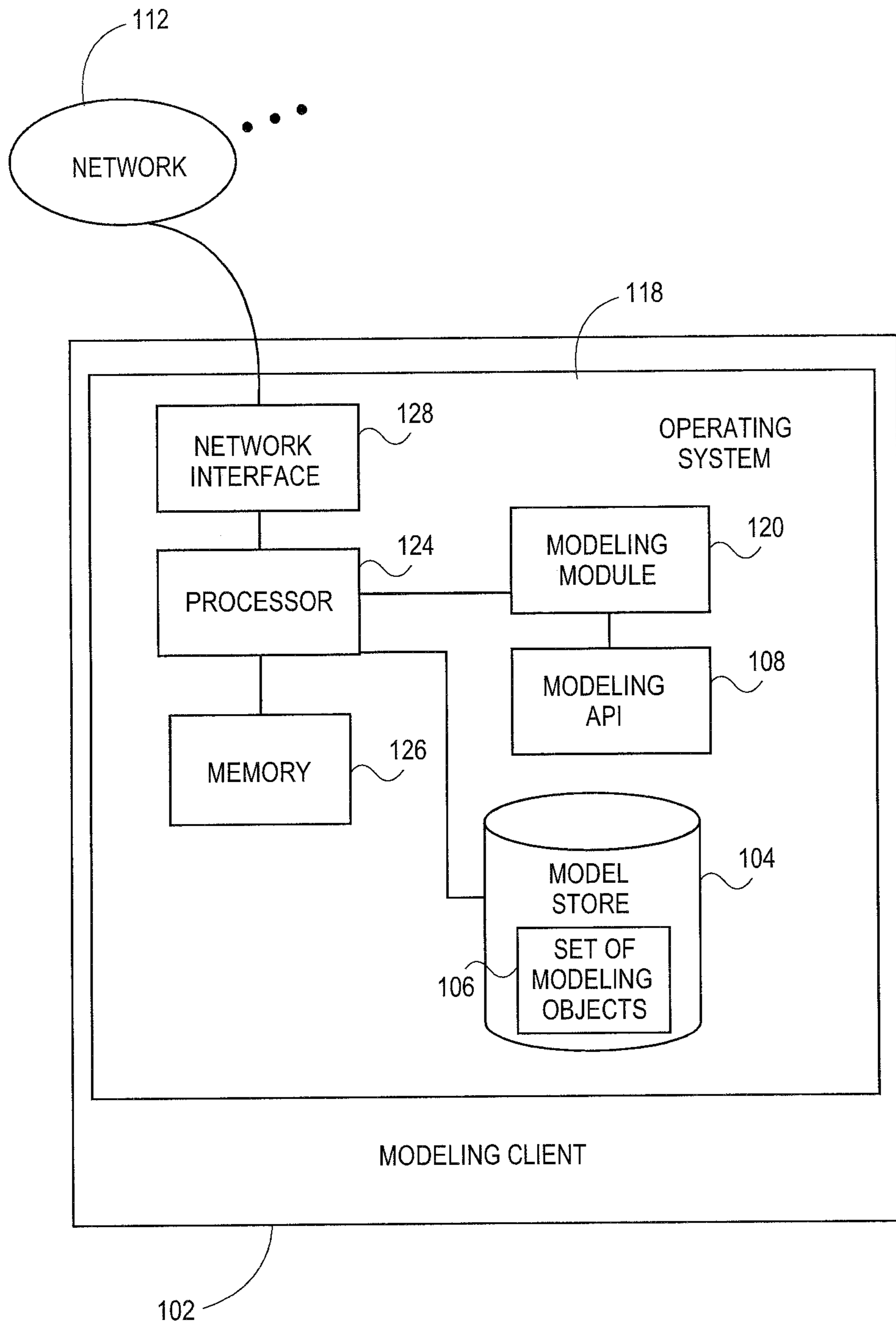
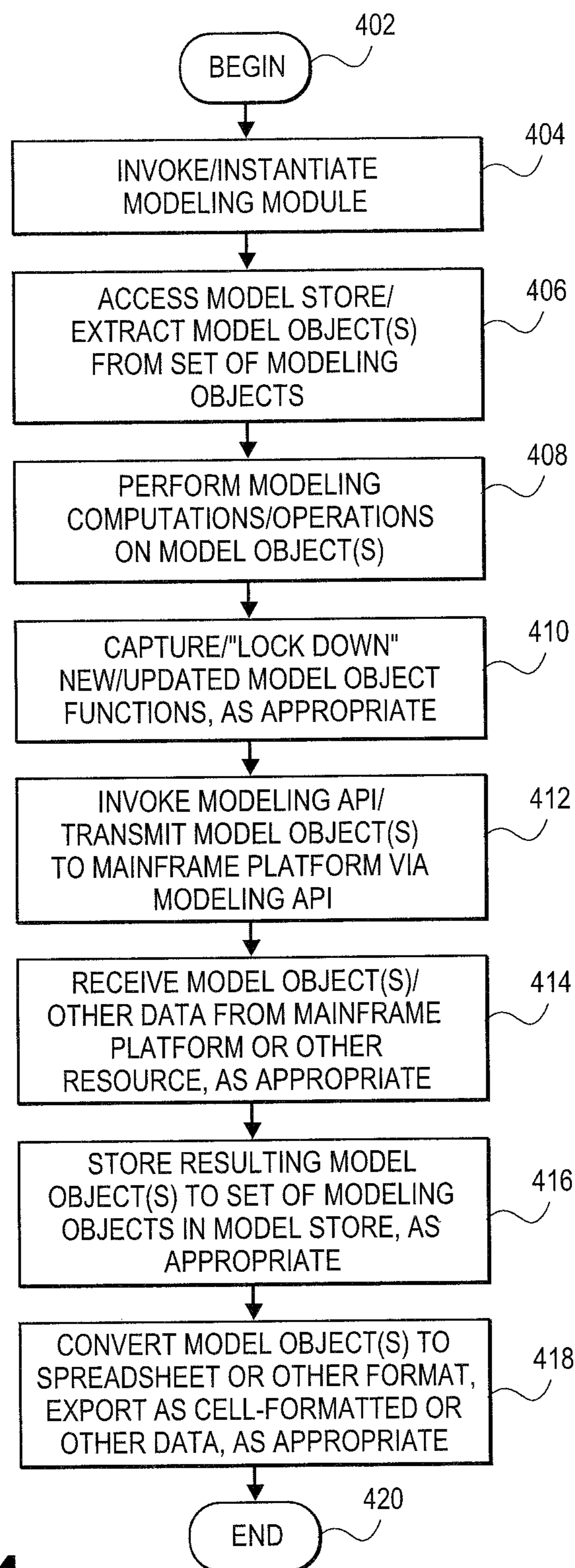


FIG. 3

**FIG. 4**

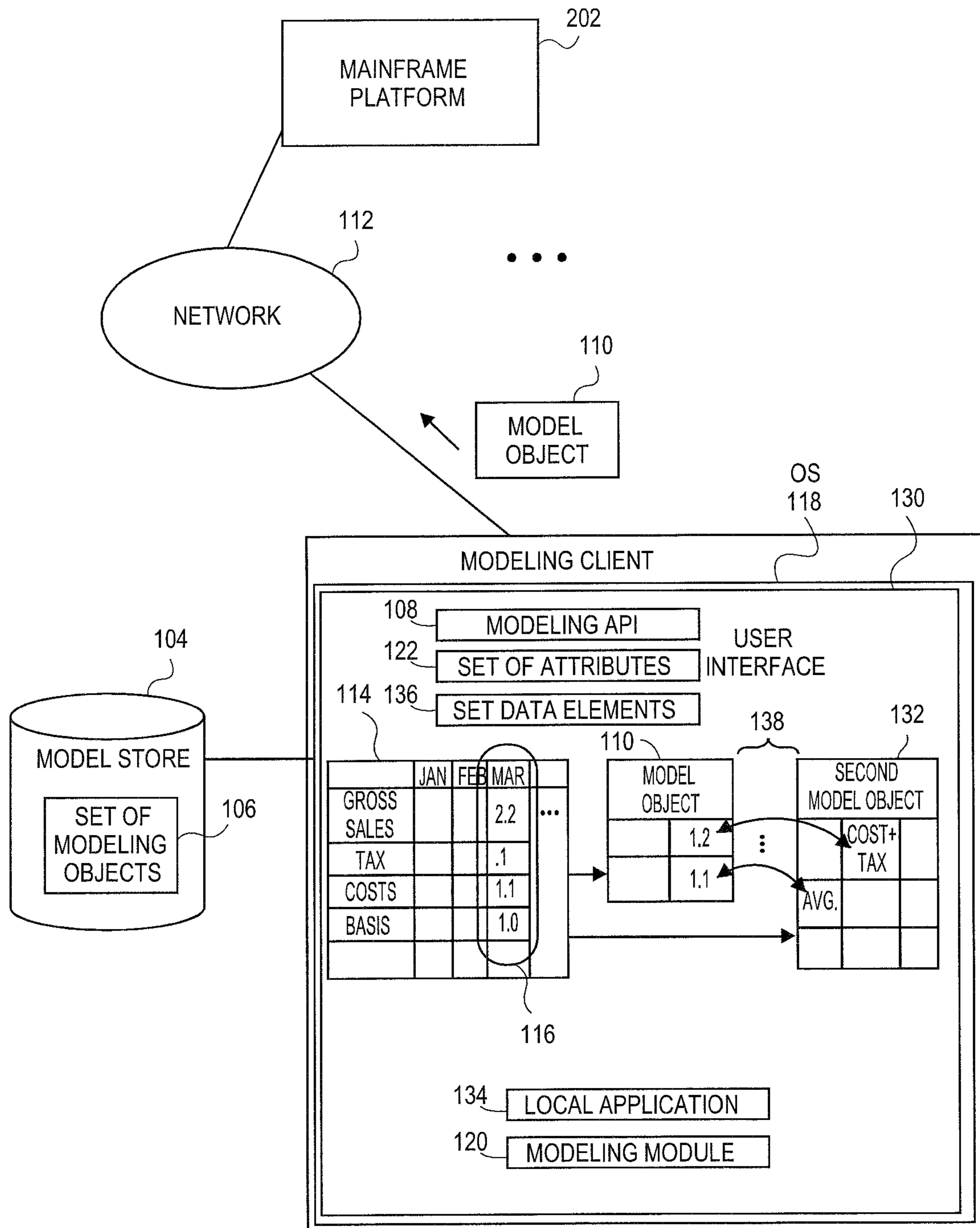


FIG. 5

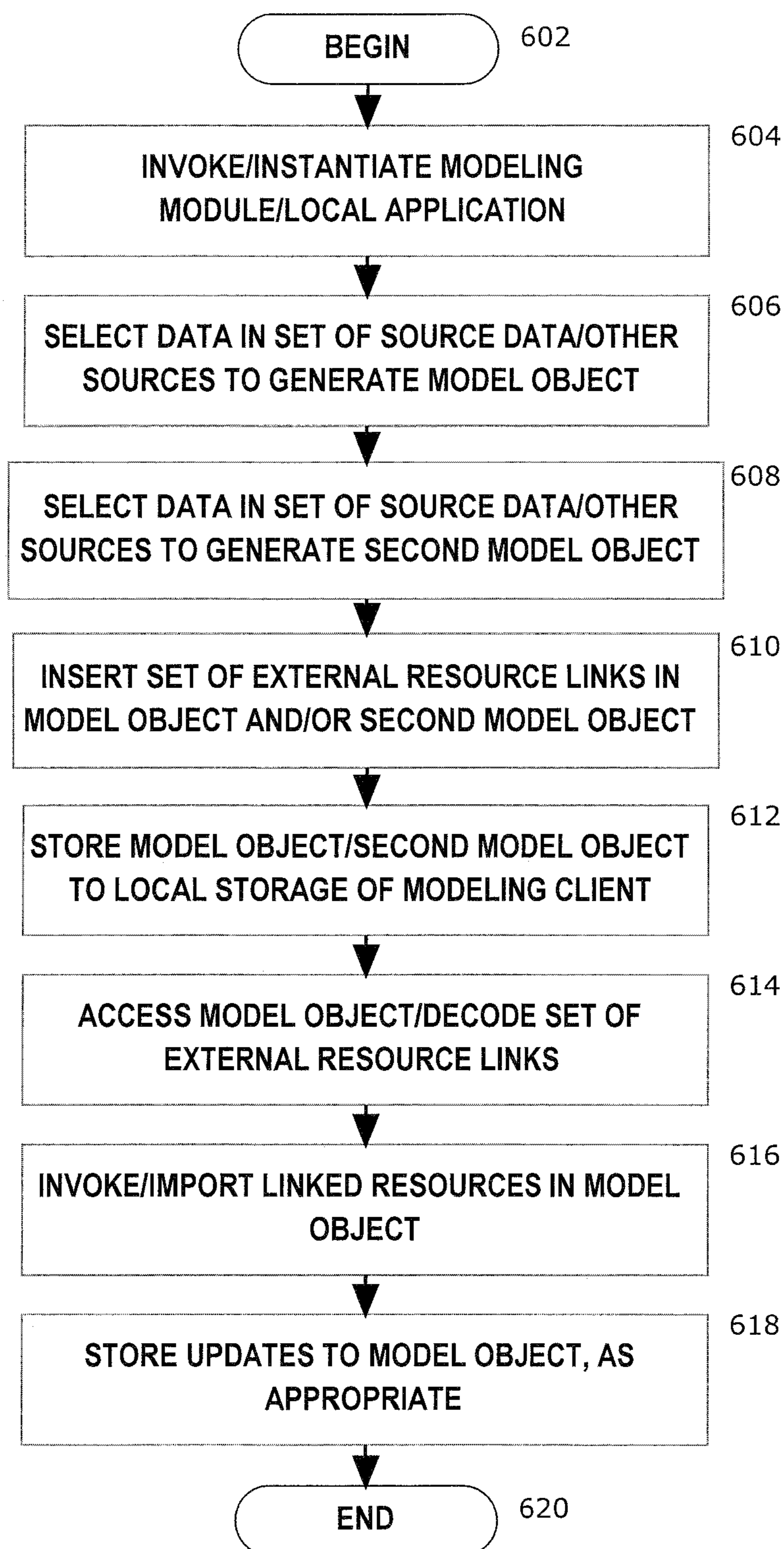


FIG. 6

1**GENERATING ACTIVE LINKS BETWEEN
MODEL OBJECTS**

FIELD

The present teachings relate to systems and methods for generating active links between model objects, and more particularly to platforms and techniques for dedicated modeling of technical, medical, financial, and other systems which are configured to generate model objects and active linkages between those model objects to share data, functions, and other attributes.

BACKGROUND OF RELATED ART

A spectrum of modeling platforms and options exist today for engineers, managers, developers and other professionals. In the case of engineering, medical, technical, financial, and other advanced modeling resources, a range of platforms are available for users interested in setting up, running and maintaining financial modeling systems. For example, organizations interested in relatively sophisticated modeling applications, such as geophysical models for detecting oil reserves or other geologic features or equity market analysis based on Black-Sholes option pricing models, a company or other organization may choose to install advanced modeling software on mainframe-class computers to run those classes of models and obtain various projections, reports, and other results. Such mainframe platform, data center and related installations, however, can involve costs on the order of millions of dollars or more, and may require the full time attention of highly skilled professionals, including programmers and managers with advanced training. As a consequence, putting a mainframe-based modeling operation into place may not be practical or possible for many organizations or users.

On the other end of the spectrum, managers, engineers and others may employ widely available entry-level applications to capture operational data and attempt to develop predictive models for engineering, financial, medical, and other applications. That class of applications can include, for example, consumer or business-level spreadsheet, database, or data visualization programs for technical, financial, and other purposes. For instance, a manager of a manufacturing facility may use a commercially available spreadsheet application to enter production numbers, schedules, and other details of that site. However, attempting to extract useful modeling outputs from those classes of applications can be difficult or impossible. For one, spreadsheet, database, and other widely available applications are typically built to produce reports based on already existing data, but not to generate modeling outputs or objects that represent predictive outputs or scenarios. For another, existing spreadsheet, database, and other applications typically involve limitations on cell size, number of dimensions, overall storage capacity, and other program parameters which, in the case of large-scale modeling operations, may be insufficient to operate on the data sets necessary to produce and run meaningful models.

For another, the data structures and outputs of existing spreadsheet, database and other entry-level or commonly available applications are typically arranged in proprietary format, rather than a widely interoperable object-based or other universal format. As still another drawback, the cells, rows, columns, and other data elements within commonly available spreadsheets, databases, and other entry-level programs can not be extracted as separate units and exported to other modeling or analytic tools. In short, the use of spread-

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sheet, database, and other consumer or business-level applications to conduct modeling operations involves significant shortcomings, due in part to the fact that those classes of platforms are not designed to reliably handle modeling functionality. At present, therefore, a manager, developer, engineer, or other professional or user with modeling requirements is faced with a choice between installing a large and expensive mainframe-based solution with its attendant infrastructure, a spreadsheet or database-based entry level solution with its attendant limitations on power and data handling, or a combination of those two types of platforms. It may be desirable to provide object-based or object-compatible modeling platforms capable of generating modeling objects which encapsulate various modeling features, and whose content is linkable via active links to exchange or share data, functions, or other attributes.

DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The accompanying drawings, which are incorporated in and constitute a part of this specification, illustrate embodiments of the present teachings and together with the description, serve to explain the principles of the present teachings. In the figures:

FIG. 1 illustrates an overall system for a modeling network including various hardware and connectivity resources that can be used in systems and methods for generating active links between model objects, according to various embodiments of the present teachings;

FIG. 2 illustrates an exemplary modeling network including a modeling server and connectivity resources, according to various embodiments;

FIG. 3 illustrates an exemplary hardware configuration for a modeling server that can be used in systems and methods for generating active links between model objects, according to various embodiments;

FIG. 4 illustrates a flow diagram of overall modeling processing for object-based modeling that can be used in systems and methods for generating active links between model objects, according to various embodiments;

FIG. 5 illustrates exemplary operations to generate modeling objects that can contain links to other objects or other external resources, according to various embodiments; and

FIG. 6 illustrates a flow diagram of processing to generate modeling model objects having links to other objects or other external resources, according to various embodiments.

DESCRIPTION OF EMBODIMENTS

Embodiments of the present teachings relate to systems and methods for generating active links between model objects. More particularly, embodiments relate to platforms and techniques that can access, extract, and generate modeling objects in a native object-based or object-compatible format. The modeling objects produced via a modeling client or other modeling tool according to the present teachings can encapsulate both source data describing a physical, medical, technical, financial, or other process or phenomena, and modeling attributes that relate the source data to predictive scenarios, specific models, and other features. In embodiments, the modeling objects can be extracted or "lifted" from data sources such as database programs or others, and stored to local storage of a local modeling client. The model objects can include links to resources that are external to the respective objects, including other model objects. The linked model objects can thereby access, share, and exchange data elements as well as functions, procedures, and other processes or

services. The linked model objects can be made visible or available via the desktop or other user interface of the modeling client. These and other embodiments described herein address the various noted shortcomings in known modeling technology, and provide a user or operator with enhanced modeling power on a desktop or other client, allowing direct extraction and manipulation of database dimensions as independent object-based entities. Systems and methods according to the present teachings also allowing seamless generation, local storage, and communication of model objects to backend mainframe platforms, data centers, middleware servers, other modeling clients, and/or other local or remote modeling, storage, or data processing resources.

Reference will now be made in detail to exemplary embodiments of the present teachings, which are illustrated in the accompanying drawings. Where possible the same reference numbers will be used throughout the drawings to refer to the same or like parts.

FIG. 1 illustrates an overall network 100 in which systems and methods for generating active links between model objects can be implemented, consistent with various embodiments of the present teachings. In embodiments as shown, a modeling client 102 can communicate with a variety of local and remote resources, including an mainframe platform 202 via one or more network 112. Client 102 can be or include, for instance, a personal computer, a server, a dedicated workstation, a mobile device, or other machine, device, hardware, or resource. One or more network 112 can be or include, for example, the Internet, a virtual private network (VPN), a local area network such as an Ethernet network, or other public or private network or networks. Mainframe platform 202 can be or include commercially available platforms or installations, such as, merely for example, mainframe or enterprise platforms available from SAP Inc. of Walldorf, Germany, and other sources.

Mainframe platform 202 can include modules, logic, and functionality to perform an array of computation and data storage tasks, including data warehousing, data mining, statistical analyses, financial planning, inventory management, customer resource management, engineering design, and other applications. In implementations as shown, mainframe platform 202 can host or communicate with a variety of resources including, merely illustratively, a mainframe data store 206, and logic or applications including an analytic module 204. Mainframe platform 202 can contain, host, support, or interface to other data processing hardware, software, and other resources. In embodiments, modeling client 102 can likewise communicate with other local or remote resources, such as a middleware server 208 hosting or interfacing to a set of data stores for online analytical processing (OLAP) or other functions. Modeling client 102 can also communicate or interface with other local or remote servers, services, data stores, or other resources.

In embodiments as shown, modeling client 102 can operate under an operating system 118, such as a distribution of the LINUX™, Unix™, or other open source or proprietary operating system. Modeling client 102 can present a user interface 130, such as a graphical user interface or command line interface, operating under operating system 118 to receive commands and inputs from a user, and operate modeling client 102. Modeling client 102 can communicate with storage resources including a modeling store 104, such as a local or remote database or data store. Modeling store 104 can store a set of modeling objects 106, in which data, functions, procedures, attributes, and/or other information related to one or more modeling object 110 can be encapsulated and stored. In embodiments, modeling object 110 can be encoded in exten-

sible markup language (XML) format. In embodiments, modeling object 110 can be encoded in other object-based or object-compatible formats or data structures. Modeling client 102 can communicate with mainframe platform 202 via a modeling application programming interface (API) 108. Modeling application programming interface (API) 108 can include, for instance, defined function calls or calls to other routines, calculations, or features, as well as data structures and parameters associated with modeling operations. For example, modeling application programming interface (API) 108 can include a function call to invoke a Monte Carlo simulation model based on a set of supplied data, such as an identified set of dimensions extracted from a spreadsheet or database. Other functions, routines, resources, and features can be called, invoked, or instantiated via modeling application programming interface (API) 108. According to embodiments in various regards, one or more local or remote modeling packages, modules, or other supporting applications can be instantiated via modeling module 120 and modeling application programming interface (API) 108 to manipulate source data and resulting one or more modeling object 110.

In embodiments, a user of modeling client 102 can access, modify, or add data modeling objects to a set of data modeling object 106 via a modeling module 120 hosted in modeling client 102. Set of data modeling objects 106 can include data objects that the user of modeling client 102 has directly entered, or, in aspects, which the user of modeling client has imported or extracted from sources such as consumer or business-level spreadsheet, database, and/or other applications or platforms. Modeling module 120 can itself be or include applications, software modules or hardware modules, or other logic or resources to operate on set of modeling objects 106. Modeling module 120 can, merely illustratively, include or access logic or modules for invoking and manipulating a variety of scientific, technical, engineering, medical, financial, manufacturing, or other modeling operations. For instance, modeling module 120 can be or include applications or logic for performing Monte Carlo simulations, finite element analyses, Black-Scholes option pricing or other market analyses, epidemiological projections, geophysical models or simulations, or other simulations, models, trend mappings, projections, or other predictive processes. In embodiments in one regard, after invoking modeling module 120 and performing any modeling task, the user of modeling client 102 can locally store and/or export one or more modeling object 110 to external platforms or resources.

In embodiments as shown, the user of modeling client 102 can for instance export or communicate one or more modeling object 110 to mainframe platform 202 via modeling application programming interface (API) 108, for storage and use at a local or remote location from within that platform. In aspects, mainframe platform 202 can receive modeling object 110 directly, without a necessity for translation, re-formatting, or invoking any spreadsheet, database, or other application from which data encapsulated in one or more modeling object 110 originated. In aspects, mainframe platform 202 can operate on one or more modeling object 110, and transmit or return that data or other results to modeling client 102 via modeling application programming interface (API) 108. Thus, according to aspects of the present teachings, modeling objects can be exchanged directly and programmatically between modeling client 102, mainframe platform 202 or other larger-scale or remote platforms, including for instance middleware server 208 or other comparatively large-scale or higher-capacity modeling or analytic tools.

In terms of operating on source data and generating one or more modeling object 110 for local storage and/or exchange

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with mainframe platform 202 or other platforms, and as shown for instance in FIG. 2, according to various embodiments, a user of modeling client 102 can invoke modeling module 120 to manipulate a set of source data 114 to identify, configure, and/or extract the functional objects, attributes, or other features of a set of data to produce a modeling output. In embodiments as shown, modeling module 120 can access a set of source data 114, from which data, attributes, and/or other metadata can be extracted to generate one or more modeling object 110. In aspects, set of source data 114 can be generated, hosted, or stored by or in a local application 134, such as a spreadsheet, database, accounting, word processing, presentation, or other application or software. In aspects, set of source data 114 can comprise data previously or newly generated in the form of an object-based modeling object, such as a modeling object entered, imported, or specified by the user of modeling client 102. In aspects, set of source data 114 can comprise data originally stored or generated in a consumer or business-level spreadsheet, database, and/or other application or software. In aspects, set of source data 114 can be initially formatted or encoded in a non-object oriented format, such as in a cellular array or in a relational database format. In aspects, set of source data 114 can be initially formatted or encoded in an object-oriented format, such as extensible markup language (XML) format. In aspects, a user of modeling client 102 can highlight, select, or otherwise specify all or a portion of set of source data 114 to generate one or more extracted functional object 116. For instance, a user can highlight a column of set of source data 114 to identify and extract data as well as functional relationships of interest, to the user, as a unified object. Thus, purely illustratively and as shown, a user may wish to obtain a view on a current month's sales figures including gross sales, tax, production or delivery costs, and cost basis, as well as other parameters related to sales activity. In aspects as shown, a user can, for instance, highlight those functional relationships by dragging a cursor or otherwise selecting a set of cells to group together, and form one or more extracted functional object 116. In aspects, selection can include the extraction of set of data elements 136, such as values stored in spreadsheet cells or database entries. In aspects, once a set of data elements 136 are selected, the functional, computational, or other modeling parameters associated with that data can be stored or associated with one or more extracted functional object 116. For instance, modeling module 120 can store associated routines, computations, processes, or other attributes or functional specifications for one or more extracted functional object 116 in set of attributes 122, which can be stored or associated with one or more extracted functional object 116. In aspects, set of attributes 122 can include the identification of or linkage to any routines, interfaces, or other functional or computational resources that will be associated with one or more extracted functional object. According to various embodiments, analytic module 204 of mainframe platform 202, or other resource or platform receiving one or more extracted functional object 116 from modeling client 102 can thereby obtain both data values derived or obtained from set of source data 114, as well as functional or procedural resources and relationships associated with that data. One or more extracted functional object 116 along with any associated set of attributes 122 can be encoded or stored in one or more modeling object 110, which can thereby be transparently exported to mainframe platform 202, middleware server 208, or other platforms or destinations for further modeling operations.

FIG. 3 illustrates an exemplary diagram of hardware, software, connectivity, and other resources that can be incorporated in a modeling client 102 configured to communicate

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with one or more network 112, including to interface with mainframe platform 202, middleware server 208, and/or other local or remote resources. In embodiments as shown, modeling client 102 can comprise a processor 124 communicating with memory 126, such as electronic random access memory, operating under control of or in conjunction with operating system 118. Operating system 118 can be, for example, a distribution of the Linux™ operating system, the Unix™ operating system, or other open-source or proprietary operating system or platform. Processor 124 also communicates with a model store 104, such as a database stored on a local hard drive, which may store or host set of modeling objects 106. Processor 124 further communicates with network interface 128, such as an Ethernet or wireless data connection, which in turn communicates with one or more networks 112, such as the Internet, or other public or private networks. Processor 124 also communicates with modeling module 120 along with modeling application programming interface (API) 108 and/or other resources or logic, to execute control and perform modeling calculation, translation, data exchange, and other processes described herein. Other configurations of the network modeling client 102, associated network connections, and other hardware and software resources are possible. While FIG. 3 illustrates modeling client 102 as a standalone system comprises a combination of hardware and software, modeling client 102 can also be implemented as a software application or program capable of being executed by a conventional computer platform. Likewise, modeling client 102 can also be implemented as a software module or program module capable of being incorporated in other software applications and programs. In either case, modeling client 102 can be implemented in any type of conventional proprietary or open-source computer language.

FIG. 4 illustrates a flow diagram of overall processing that can be used in systems and methods for generating active links between model objects, according to various embodiments. In 402, processing can begin. In 404, a user of modeling client 102 or other client or device can invoke or instantiate modeling module 120 or other logic, to perform modeling operations. In 406, modeling module 120 can access model store 104 and extract one or more modeling object 110 from set of modeling objects 106. In 408, modeling computations or other operations can be performed on one or more modeling object 110. For example, a modeling operation can be performed to project or predict the output of a factory based on various supply scenarios for parts, materials, energy costs, or other variables. In 410, the values, functions, linkages, or other attributes of one or more data modeling object 110 that were accessed, produced, or modified by the modeling operations can be captured, fixed, or locked down by modeling module 120. For instance, the resulting one or more modeling object 110 can be stored to set of modeling objects 106 in model store 104, or other databases or data stores.

In 412, modeling application programming interface (API) 108 can be invoked by modeling module 120, by mainframe platform 202, or other resources to transfer one or more modeling object 110 to mainframe platform 202. In embodiments, one or more modeling object 110 can for instance be communicated to mainframe platform 202 via a secure connection or channel, such as a secure socket layer (SSL) connection, via a channel encrypted using a public/private key infrastructure, or other channel or connection. In 414, one or more model object 110 can be received in modeling module 120 from mainframe platform 202 or other resource, as appropriate. For example, an updated version of one or more model object 110 reflecting new data, new modeling results,

or other information can be received in modeling module 120. In 416, the resulting new, updated, or modified one or more model object 110 can be stored to set of modeling objects 106 in model store 104, as appropriate. In embodiments, one or more model objects 110 can in addition or instead be stored to mainframe data store 206, to middleware server 208, to another modeling client or other client, or other site or destination. In 418, modeling module 120 can convert one or more model objects 110 to spreadsheet, database, or other format, and export any converted data as a set of cell-formatted information, or data encoded in other formats. For instance, modeling module 120 can convert or translate one or more model objects to cell data values or database entries, and export that data to client-level applications on modeling client 102 or other local or remote devices or storage. In 420, processing can repeat, return to a prior processing point, jump to a further processing point, or end.

According to various embodiments of the present teachings, and as for example generally illustrated in FIG. 5, in implementations modeling module 120 can generate modeling objects by operating on one or more set of source data 114, to create a model object and a second model object 132, for instance using techniques described herein. In aspects, model object 110 can include a set of external resource links 138 external to the object, such as hyperlinks or other links, pointers, or identifiers. In embodiments, each link in set of external resource links 138 can specify or identify one or more resources to which a model object, such as model object 110, can link, connect, communicate, or otherwise interact, including other one or more additional model objects, data fields or functions in those additional model objects, services, Web sites, applications, and/or other resources. In embodiments, modeling module 120 can insert set of external resource links 138 as information in set of attributes 122 associated with model object 110, second model object 132, and/or other objects or entities.

In embodiments, the linkage identified in set of external resource links 138 can link to second model object 132, and for instance specify that a data element located in a certain location of second model object 132 be automatically imported into a corresponding cell, field, or other site of model object 110, for instance whenever the data element populating second model object 132 at that site is updated. In embodiments, functions or other procedures or calls can be imported from second model object 132 to model object 110. In embodiments, set of external resource links 138 can contain links or mappings from one data element or function to multiple data fields, elements or functions of different model objects, from multiple data fields, elements or function to multiple data elements or functions, from multiple data fields, elements or functions to a single data element or function, or other configurations. In embodiments, two or more model objects can be linked via set of external resource links 138 in a chain, tree, node, web, or other configurations.

In embodiments in various regards, once model object 110, second model object 132, and any other objects are extracted, modeling module 120 can capture and store, or lock down, the data elements or content of those objects along with any attributes or other metadata, including set of external resource links 138, in or in association with each modeling object. In embodiments, model object 110, second model object 132, and others so generated can be stored in model store 104, or other local storage of modeling client 102. In embodiments as shown, therefore, model object 110 and second model object 132 can reside on modeling client 102, and any one or more of the resources linked between those objects or other resources can be seamlessly shared on modeling client 102. It may be

noted that while each of model object 110 and second model object 132 can be stored or hosted in modeling client 102, in embodiments, either of model object 110, second model object 132, and other objects can also or instead be hosted or stored in other local or remote platforms, such as mainframe platform 202, middleware servers, other modeling or other clients, or other destinations.

FIG. 6 illustrates a flow diagram of overall processing to generate and manipulate one or more model object 110 having links to additional model objects or other external resources, according to various embodiments. In 602, processing can begin. In 604, a user can invoke or initiate modeling module 120 and/or local application 134, such as, for instance, a spreadsheet application, a database application, or other applications or software. In 606, the user can select data in set of source data 114 or other data sources to generate a model object 110, including related data elements and attributes. In 608, the user can select data in set of source data 114 or other data sources to generate second model object 132, including related data elements and attributes for that object.

In 610, the user can insert a set of external resource links 138 in either of model object 110 and/or second model object 132, for instance, by highlighting desired data elements, functions, or other information in each object, and selecting a linkage type (e.g., hyperlink, pointer, one-way link, two-way link, or other linkage) or other mapping between the objects. In aspects, multiple linkages between elements or functions of either model object 110 and/or second model object 132 can be established. In 612, modeling module 120 can store model object 110 and/or second model object 132 to local storage of modeling client 102, such as model store 104 or other local storage, as appropriate. In 614, modeling module 120 can access model object 110, and decode set of external resource links 138 to identify second model object 132 or other external resources to associate and link with model object 110. In 616, modeling module 120 can invoke and import, receive, update, or otherwise process the data, functions, or other resources so linked to model object 110, such as, for instance, to automatically import any updated data from certain sections of second model object 132 (e.g., columns 2 and 3), or call a function or routine specified by a cell (e.g., cell) of second model object 132. In 618, any updates to model object 110 can be stored to model store 104 or other storage, as appropriate. In 620, processing can repeat, return to a prior processing point, jump to a further processing point, or end.

The foregoing description is illustrative, and variations in configuration and implementation may occur to persons skilled in the art. For example, while embodiments have been described wherein one or more model object 110 is accessed and manipulated via one modeling client 102, in embodiments, one or more users can use multiple modeling clients, or networks including modeling clients or other resources, to operate on model object data. For further example, while embodiments have been described in which modeling client 102 may interact with one mainframe platform 202 and/or one middleware server 208, in embodiments, one or more modeling client 102 can interact with multiple mainframe platforms, data centers, middleware servers, and/or other resources, in various combinations. Yet further, while embodiments have been described in which a modeling client 102 interacts with a mainframe platform 202 and/or middleware server 208, in embodiments, rather than interact with large-scale mainframe platforms, data centers, or middleware servers, modeling client 102 can interact with other local or remote modeling clients, networks of those clients, or, in

embodiments, can operate to perform modeling operations on a stand-alone basis, without necessarily communicating with other modeling platforms. Other resources described as singular or integrated can in embodiments be plural or distributed, and resources described as multiple or distributed can in 5 embodiments be combined. The scope of the present teachings is accordingly intended to be limited only by the following claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A method comprising:
 - invoking an application, the application comprising source data, wherein the source data comprises a cellular array format;
 - encapsulating a first set of cells of the source data in a first predictive model object, wherein a modeling application performs an operation on the first predictive model object to predict an output, and wherein the first predictive model object is encoded in extensible markup language (XML) format;
 - encapsulating a second set of cells of the source data in a second predictive model object, wherein the second predictive model object is encoded in XML format and, a cell of the second set of cells in the second predictive model object specifies a function;
 - receiving a user selection of a linkage type for an import link, wherein the import link imports the function specified by the cell of the second set of cells in the second predictive model object as a corresponding function in a corresponding cell in the first set of cells in the first predictive model object;
 - inserting the import link in the first predictive model object in view of the user selection of the linkage type;
 - changing, by the modeling application, the function specified by the cell of the second set of cells in the second predictive model by performing the operation on the second predictive model object to predict a second output; and
 - calling, by a client device, the changed function specified by the cell of the second set of cells in the second predictive model object as the corresponding function in the corresponding cell in the first set of cells in the first predictive model object using the import link in response to the function in the second predictive model being changed.
2. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
 - storing the first predictive model object and the second predictive model object in storage of the client device.
3. The method of claim 1, wherein the first predictive model object and the second predictive model object are 50 linked in at least one of a tree, node, or web configuration.
4. The method of claim 1, wherein the first predictive model object and the second predictive model object comprise an attribute, the attribute comprising at least one of a function call parameter or a linkage parameter.
5. The method of claim 1, wherein the link comprises a plurality of links.
6. The method of claim 5, wherein the plurality of links invoke at least one of a plurality of additional predictive model objects, a mainframe modeling platform, or an additional modeling client device.
7. The method of claim 1, wherein the source data comprises at least one of spreadsheet data, database data, word processing data, or presentation data.
8. The method of claim 1, where the source data is hosted 65 in at least one of local storage of the client device or remote storage.

9. The method of claim 1, wherein the operation is a Monte Carlo operation.

10. A client system comprising:

- an interface to source data in an application; and
- a processor, communicating with the source data via the interface, the processor to:
 - invoke an application, the application comprising source data, wherein the source data comprises a cellular array format,
 - encapsulate a first set of cells of the source data in a first predictive model object, wherein a modeling application performs an operation on the first predictive model object to predict an output, and wherein the first predictive model object is encoded in extensible markup language (XML) format,
 - encapsulate a second set of cells of the source data in a second predictive model object, wherein the second predictive model object is encoded in XML format and, a cell of the second set of cells in the second predictive model object specifies a function,
 - receive a user selection of a linkage type for an import link, wherein the import link imports the function specified by the cell of the second set of cells in the second predictive model object as a corresponding function in a corresponding cell in the first set of cells in the first predictive model object;
 - insert the import link in the first predictive model object in view of the user selection of the linkage type,
 - change, by the modeling application, the function specified by the cell of the second set of cells in the second predictive model by performing the operation on the second predictive model object, and
 - call the changed function specified by the cell of the second set of cells in the second predictive model object as the corresponding function in the corresponding cell in the first set of cells in the first predictive model object using the import link in response to the function in the second predictive model being changed.

11. The system of claim 10, further comprising:

- a memory coupled to the processor to store the first predictive model object and the second predictive model object.

12. The system of claim 10, wherein the first predictive model object and the second predictive model object are linked in at least one of a tree, node, or web configuration.

13. The system of claim 10, wherein the first predictive model object and the second predictive model object comprise an attribute, the attribute comprising at least one of a function call parameter or a linkage parameter.

14. The system of claim 10, wherein the link comprises a plurality of links.

15. The system of claim 14, wherein the plurality of links invoke at least one of a plurality of additional predictive model objects, a mainframe modeling platform, or an additional modeling client system.

16. The system of claim 10, wherein the source data comprises at least one of spreadsheet data, database data, word processing data, or presentation data.

17. The system of claim 10, where the source data is hosted in at least one of local storage of the client system or remote storage.

18. The client system of claim 10, wherein the operation is a Monte Carlo operation.

19. A non-transitory computer system readable medium including instructions that, when executed by a processor, cause the processor to perform operations comprising:

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invoking an application, the application comprising source data, wherein the source data comprises a cellular array format;

encapsulating a first set of cells of the source data in a first predictive model object, wherein a modeling application performs an operation on the first predictive model object to predict an output, and wherein the first predictive model object is encoded in extensible markup language (XML) format;

encapsulating a second set of cells of the source data in a second predictive model object, wherein the second predictive model object is encoded in XML format and, a cell of the second set of cells in the second predictive model object specifies a function;

receiving a user selection of a linkage type for an import link, wherein the import link imports the function specified by the cell of the second set of cells in the second predictive model object as a corresponding function in a corresponding cell in the first set of cells in the first predictive model object;

inserting the import link in the first predictive model object in view of the user selection of the linkage type;

changing, by the modeling application, the function specified by the cell of the second set of cells in the second

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predictive model by performing the operation on the second predictive model object to predict a second output; and

calling, by the processor, the changed function specified by the cell of the second set of cells in the second predictive model object as the corresponding function in the corresponding cell in the first set of cells in the first predictive model object using the import link in response to the function in the second predictive model being changed.

20. The non-transitory computer system readable medium of claim **19**, wherein the first predictive model object and the second predictive model object are linked in at least one of a tree, node, or web configuration.

21. The non-transitory computer system readable medium of claim **19**, wherein the first attribute and the second attribute comprise at least one of a function call parameter or a linkage parameter.

22. The non-transitory computer system readable medium of claim **19**, wherein the link comprises a plurality of links to invoke at least one of a plurality of additional predictive model objects, a mainframe modeling platform, or an additional modeling client device.

23. The non-transitory computer system readable medium of claim of claim **19**, wherein the operation is a Monte Carlo operation.

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